

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Timothy D. MacIntyre (Reg. No. 42,824) on 12/1/08.

The application has been amended as follows:

2. Cancel claims 3, 4, 13-18, 20, 21 and 24-27.
3. Replace the previous versions of claims 2 with the following version. Changes to the claim are indicated by underline. Please note the addition of two commas in line 11 of claim 2 below, one inserted after "order" and another inserted after "random".

Claim 2:

An image processing method comprising:

using an image processing apparatus to perform the following steps:

a first step of detecting an iris region of an eye of a person from an original image;

a second step of performing a predetermined image conversion to the iris region detected in the first step; and

a third step of outputting the original image the iris region of which the predetermined image conversion has been performed to;

wherein the predetermined image conversion is image conversion in which the iris region is divided into a plurality of portions and respective images of divided portions are re-arranged in a predetermined order, or at random, between an image of the iris region and another iris image, the another iris image having been processed so that at least one of size, color and shape thereof is the same as the image of the iris region.

4. Claim 19:

In line 10, insert a -- “,” -- after the word -- “order” --.

In line 11, insert a -- “,” -- after the word -- “random” --.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of claims 2, 5, 7, 8, 19, 22 and 23 in the reply filed on 10/7/08 is acknowledged.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed 9/28/04 failed to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(2), which requires a legible copy of each cited foreign patent document; each non-patent literature publication or that portion which caused it to be listed; and all other information or that portion which caused it to be listed. At the Examiner's request a copy of each missing document has been provided and is attached hereto. The IDS filed on 9/28/04 has been considered. The foreign documents have also been listed on form PTO-892.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 2, 5, 7, 8, 19, 22 and 23 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

4. As to claim 2, none of the prior art teach or fairly suggests the limitation "wherein the predetermined image conversion is image conversion in which the iris region is divided into a plurality of portions and respective images of divided portions are re-arranged in a

predetermined order, or at random, between an image of the iris region and another iris image, the another iris image having been processed so that at least one of size, color and shape thereof is the same as the image of the iris region”, in combination with the other limitations of the claim. The prior art of USPN 6,836,554 to Bolle et al. discloses detecting an iris region of an image, performing a predetermined image conversion to the iris region wherein the conversion is one in which the iris region is divided into a plurality of portions and respective images of divided portions are re-arranged in a predetermined order or at random, and outputting the image of the iris region to which the conversion has been performed, see Figs. 10a and 10b. However, the prior art of Bolle et al. does not teach or fairly suggest that the divided portions are re-arranged in a predetermined order, or at random, between an image of the iris region and another iris image, the another iris image having been processed so that at least one of size, color and shape thereof is the same as the image of the iris region, as disclosed in the limitations of claim 2.

5. Claim 19 discloses similar limitations to those of claim 2 and is allowable for the same reasoning indicated above for claim 2.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

USPN 7,120,607 to Bolle et al. discloses iris region conversion.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to AARON W. CARTER whose telephone number is (571)272-7445. The examiner can normally be reached on 8am - 4:30 am (Mon. - Fri.).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Werner can be reached on (571) 272-7401. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Aaron W Carter/

Application/Control Number: 10/509,462

Page 7

Art Unit: 2624

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2624